

THE ALLEGED PROSELYTISM

[illegible]

OPENING SERVICES,

"Lessons to be learned from the foundering of the

Burton-street Tabernacle, at Woolloomooloo, was laid

In Lunacy.—(Before his Honor the PRIMATE JUDGE.)

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ice. *The FUTURE of the SYDNEY HOSPITAL*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD

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conditions are perfectly and admirably fulfilled by the Macquarie-street site, for its position is so central—indeed it is the most central—that except for the hospital itself, it is the only place in the city which can be reached by level well-made roads. Then with respect to the proximity of its surgical staff, two of its four members live in the city, and the other two are within five minutes' walk at most from the hospital. One instance with regard to this latter consideration will illustrate my meaning more than many could. On the evening of the 10th inst. at 6 p.m. while on duty, a compound depressed fracture of the skull; the patient had fallen from a wall on some sharp stones, and when relieved at the hospital, the patient was brought to the hospital by the honorary surgeon for the week well apprised of the occurrence and arrived at the accident ward a few minutes later. Before 7 o'clock (an hour and a half) the patient was in the operating theatre, and the operation of trephining had been successfully performed, and the patient was comfortably in bed, with a nursing woman by his side. The fact that the patient was in such a rapid progress to recovery, and death was averted by the timely removal of the depressed fragment was solely due to the fact that the Macquarie-street hospital is so central. It has been my fortune to have seen hospitals in many parts of the world, and I do not think there is one to compare with this.

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183, William-street, December 11.

THE UNEMPLOYED AS GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

—TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Sir,—In your issue of Tuesday last is published a letter from the Commissioner for Railways, addressed forth a resolution in the carrying out of the public works of the colony.

In brief, it is proposed in lieu of the old-fashioned system giving the work to the lowest bidder, to initiate a system of "task-work," under the better-known form of association labour.

As no possible justification can be put forward in defence of this revolutionary alteration of the mode of carrying out the public works (no possible argument can be used in the labour) allow me to state some of the reasons which strongly recommendatory of the new innovation, and conclusively evidence to those in authority that they should carefully consider before entering upon a system of

management that will be a real triumph in the public service and economy in the distribution of the public revenue. Primarily, the necessity for giving work to the unemployed in the present depression is a consideration. The Government has adopted the radical procedure of departing from the system of public tendering for our State works. I think, before the proposed change is initiated, it is necessary to consider whether the system has operated in our colonies as well as our own.

Under similar conditions as those existing here Government of New Zealand adopted the task-work system. The trunk line of railway from Dunedin to Christchurch, and also, under Mr. Fraser, a portion of the Tasar section of railway. All our New Zealanders will be familiar with the fact that the system was a complete failure, and on the same lines have never since been attempted. The Queensland Government commenced under Mr. Walter Cross to construct a portion of the trunk line of railway on the task-work system, but this, which resulted in failure to do work under the ruling price of the public works contractors.

It is a very instructive knowledge to know Mr. Moriarty's opinion of this task-work system on a larger scale than is now proposed started construction of the present Sydney water supply works. The Government picked men, and the best of their class to be employed, but as contractors they were not a success from a Government standpoint, nor did they succeed in making the water supply works a success. The Government of the Bourne and Rivers abandoned the experiment and let work to contractors, who did the work cheaper, quicker and in every way more satisfactory to the department.

It is a very instructive knowledge to also know that we have abandoned the sub-contracting style of carrying their work, which is the same method that is proposed to be initiated by the Government. There is no end to the evils of the sub-contracting system, and the result is that it exists in a crowd of men, with the result that dis-

gation unions, and the fabric factories to the ground.
If it is expected that the Government and the three
concerned works shall fulfil that first law in all civil
society, viz., to earn the price of the food that he consumes
and the clothes that he wears, and that he shall not be
allowed to eat of bread of idleness, then I submit that
the Government should be allowed to take the most
fashionable style of calling tenders publicly for our
works, and give the work to the lowest bidder.

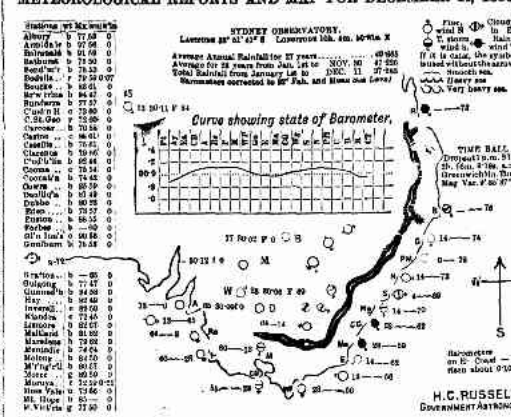
If the North Shore and Pearson's Corner railway is
given to one of the contracting firms of the colony, they
will be able to carry out the work of the Government
as the Government would, should they carry it out
themselves. The extra cost of management that the Govern-
ment would necessarily have to incur would be the cost
of profit to the contractor. The cost of management
carried out under Government control, compared
with management alone 10 per cent. more than
management done by a contracting firm. The reason for this
obvious. When the money is being spent the contractor
has to make a profit, and he has to make a profit in
advance and decide to make it as far as possible in getting
the best results for the labour employed. There are a
few in Government situations who do the same, but they
are few and far between. The majority of these contractors

in the success of their efforts, and are not generally than
or rewarded for any extra role they display, the result be-
that they let things slide as smoothly as possible, and
only just enough to keep their billets.

Let it not be understood that I deprecate giving employ-
ment in urgent cases of need to deserving men, who wou-
out Government aid would suffer extreme hardship. I
one can so well sympathize with those now out of employ-
ment and seeking that work they are so willing to do,
cannot obtain, as one who has himself passed thro-
the same disheartening experiences. But what I
object to is the evil results that will at-

the introduction of a system that has for objects and result an extension of political patronage.

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